

The House Rotted (with me inside)

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The House Rotted (with me inside)

by Anonymous

Summary

An AU of my fic I Asked for a Monster, in which the monsters never came and Tommy never left that room...

There is a house that is rotting on the end of the street. The roof caves in and the doors decay, yet it still stands. Something is inside, breathing, amidst the alliums that grow and take root and suffocate that which they touch. Something sits in a room, trapped, rotting in itself, for it doesn't know how to leave and it doesn't know how to die. That something, finally, is found.

Or

AlliumMonster!Tommy, come get yall's juice

Notes

THIS FIC IS PART OF A SEIRES AND WILL PROBABLY MAKE MORE SENSE WITH CONTEXT, BUT HONESTLY IT'S PROBABLY FINE TO READ WITHOUT. It's an AU of my main fic I Asked for a Monster, and contains mild spoilers and references to events up to Ch10 or Ch11-ish. Honestly though you can probably read this without context and still have a good time.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

It breathed, slow and shuddering and so loud, but it breathed all the same. Painful, wheezing rasps that competed only with the groans and creaks of a house that long since should have died. It was quiet, so quiet, and how the monster wished it could hear anything else.

The walls were decaying, crumbling with mould-riddled wood and peeling plaster, the ceiling sagging and caving in, wires dangling from a broken light. The hungering flora pressed ever inward, consuming that which did not die fast enough. It bloomed as well, in splotches of deep sagging green and in purple bursts that swayed gently and dripped. The flowers tried to make it pretty, but the sight was always ruined by the bodies. By the people that rotted too, suspended in where they were caught, skin blistering and stretching and falling into strands until it sloughed off into puddles on the floor. The monster wished it could see anything else.

But the monster couldn't leave.

It remained curled in the corner, floor and walls and palms scratched with bitten-off nails. Like everything else, it decayed, with beauty and with ease. A portion of its forearm was bark-like, rigid and brown, cracked from where flowers broke through the sickly skin. Its right leg was worse, near indiscernible amidst the flora that consumed it so completely, that left it punctured with roots and moss and a buzzing mould that crept in colours of whites and blacks. Were it to stand, the bone beneath might just fracture in its dry, brittle neglect, so it did not stand.

Still, the worst of all the injuries was the head. Was the caved-in skull marked with blood that was dry and sticky, where bushels of flowers grew and tried to sew the awful sight back together. It was collapsed, so that one eye sagged closed, the socket crushed, while the other remained open, roving over the room. Watching. Seeing nothing but the slow movement of a hanging corpse back and forth, the body's torso slowly having its muscles grow stringy and frayed until the weight pulled it off and collapsed it to the floor.

Strange, how this monster couldn't decay like the bodies. Strange, how the monster couldn't die like these intruders.

They were people that had entered the house and sometimes the room, and the monster... the monster didn't mean to, it didn't think. It couldn't stop the growth and the rot, and it couldn't stop the deaths.

It could only envy them.

It could only sit in its corner with fear coursing through it, scarcely breathing as it waited to hear footsteps, hoping to god that it would be another stranger and not the one who'd done this to it. The door to the room was hollowed by rot, wood soft in splinters, the top right corner crumbled away so the hall could be seen. Enough that the monster kept flickering its attention to it, waiting to see the source of its fear. It had to be inevitable.

The plywood that was over the window in the room had fallen into the same disgrace as everything else, pliable and damp and moulded, so that sunlight and darkness alike could

enter, tinged green with plant life. It let the monster know that days were passing, but not how many.

It let the monster know that it was night, when footsteps creaked on soft, pliant floorboards. There was someone in the house. The ragged, near sobbing breaths cut off, painful as the monster held perfectly, terrifyingly still, the flower roots pinching its skin as they grew tighter, the painful curl to its stomach both due to its fear and anxiety, and from the ever present hunger that existed within it.

Suspended in time, it listened. It was so good at listening. The footsteps were heavy and dragged across the floor in a distinct, repetitive sound. Fsssh thump. Fsssh thump. Fsssh thump.

The stairs strained underneath the stranger, a low ominous gurgle to the house as it struggled to remain together. The footsteps, when they reached upstairs, produced a solid, thunking echo, softened by the squish of moss.

The shadow was at the door and the monster- the monster could only watch, curled tight, nails digging into its stiff and rotted skin. Its eye was wide, scared, the side of its skull collapsed and swaying with flowers that tickled its cheek as if in assurance.

Slowly, the door, as much of it that remained with its knob long since fallen loose to the floor, swung open with awful protest, soft wood splinters falling. There was someone there, but they weren't- they weren't what the monster was afraid of.

They would die all the same.

The monster shrieked and sobbed, and knew what would happen next, and could do nothing but watch even as it wished to curl up tighter and pretend the hanging corpse in the room didn't still sicken it. The stranger took one breath, said no words, and stumbled and fell to their knees as in one swift move the rot climbed up them, biting into their flesh and tearing it open with flowers and roots. The side of their face, which was covered by a boar skull, exploded into vivid purples of alliums, sprouting from the eye socket and the edges of the bone. The flowers devoured the stranger's arm, curling out from under their sleeve.

They didn't scream though. That was the strange part.

The monster waited... and waited... but all the stranger did was stagger back to their feet, spare one fleeting glance at the monster in the corner, and then reach up and gingerly grab the flowers by their stems and *pull*.

There was the awful, wet sound of something tearing, and when the flowers dangled, their roots were sunk into a chunk of flesh. The stranger didn't seem to care. They looked at the flowers on their arm, and repeated the process. The monster watched, horrified and scarcely breathing, the sight of the stranger's arm peeling up with the roots and yet the stranger didn't so much as wince, just rolled their sleeve back down, not even bothering to bleed.

When they turned to the monster, it flinched, and wondered how it could avoid this attention, how it could sink into the floors and walls until the house swallowed it full.

It also wondered if the visitor would finally be the thing that killed it.

The sockets of the boar skull, which must have been obtained after a messy kill, with bits of old flesh still dribbling off, observed it so dispassionately, the hulking frame of the stranger filling the room and making them hunch near the ceiling. Layers of fabric surrounded them, hiding their shape, matted in blood that gave it darkened stains and an ever present scent of rot and copper. The monster imagined a little more thoroughly that it would die here.

“Hullo,” said the stranger, in a deep rumble.

The monster stared. It waited. Its awful, strained breathing was the only noise in the room besides the background groans of a house ready to collapse.

The stranger took a step forward, and the monster couldn’t help but flinch again. It curled up as tight as it could, because it was used to pain, but it hated the anticipation. It just wanted this all to be over with. Please. Just. Something needed to end.

The stranger paused, for just a moment, then it approached once more, the floorboards cracking beneath them, yet they did not fall through. At no point did they pause to address the corpse hanging in the room. (The body of a hunter that thought they could rid the house of its infection. They were wrong.)

The monster couldn’t look, its eyes squeezed closed and its breaths tapered out again.

Something touched its face, and it was warm.

Its eye shot open, staring up at the stranger who was crouched over it, whose fabric draped and tickled its legs, whose hand was resting on its face. Warm. The fingers were warm, and large and broad, and their palm cupped the entirety of its cheek. It opened its mouth, but couldn’t make more than a wheezing sound, and then it realized something else:

It was crying.

It blinked, confused, watching its own teardrops, which were a milky pink, fall silently from its eyes and splash onto its palms. Why was it crying? Why was the touch so burning, so present, that it shocked every part of its being, so that its world was nothing more than the hand on its cheeks and the tears on its skin?

It looked up, and there was someone past that boar skull, that looked at it so kindly.

“There you are,” the stranger whispered. “You’re alright.”

Their hand was on the monster’s cheeks, and the rot spread a bit, moulding the stranger’s skin, causing little bits of moss and flowers to grow and pinch, but the stranger didn’t care. They remained unbothered by what taunted the monster ceaselessly.

Oh. They were here. They were here, and the monster wasn’t alone, and it- it wasn’t really sure what to do about that.

“I’m Techno,” they said, no longer a stranger. “It’s alright, I’m like you. Can you tell me your name, little one?”

Oh. It did have a name. It sort of forgot about that. It was someone. It was someone and yet it was a monster, and those two facts would never slot together. It shook, tremors up and down its arms and legs and body, but that hand on its cheek held it steady. It didn’t know how to talk anymore, how to do anything but scream and breath and cry, but it could try.

“Tommy,” it said. *I was Tommy. I mourn him though, whoever he was, because I think he’s gone now.*

“Alright Tommy, can you tell me what you’re doing here?” the stranger- Techno asked, so softly, so gently, as if they- he understood how close Tommy was to falling apart. How close the monster was to splintering and fracturing like the door to the room, until all that remained was an idea of what once existed.

“I-“ the monster said, and its eyes were wet, even the eye that couldn’t open, that was crushed by- by- It was panicking now, because someone knew it, someone was here with it, and it might just exist after all. “I need help,” it said. It begged. It clumsily fell forward, reaching out and latching onto the stranger, fingers sunken into wet, matted fabric. “Please. Please help. I need- I need help. Please help. Please-“

“Alright,” the stranger soothed, and he held the monster’s face in both hands. Two warm palms curled around Tommy’s cheeks, and it closed its eyes and it shuddered and breathed, mind dizzy and grounded and for once no longer drifting untethered. “It’s alright. I’m here. I’ll help you. Can you tell me how I can help?”

Tommy pulled in another pained, laborious breath, shuddering, pressing its forehead against the stranger’s chest, willing it all to be okay. “He’s- He’s going to find me. He’s going to come here soon and I can’t- He’ll hurt me. He’ll hurt me- I don’t want- I need help. Please. I don’t want him to- I don’t- I need to get away-“

(The stranger, in his kindness, did not correct it. Did not say that nothing more than hunters could hurt it now. Didn’t say that the only bodies in the house were dead ones. He didn’t say that everything was okay.)

“It’s alright,” Techno said again, and his arms were around Tommy, so close, so that it could curl inwards and feel surrounded, so that it could feel like someone else was with it. So that it knew it wasn’t alone. “I’m here. I’ll help. I’ll help you get away. I won’t let him hurt you.”

It shuddered, and fell, near collapsing in a relief it couldn’t name. Still- Still what if this all wasn’t true, what if the stranger didn’t realize-?

“He hurt me,” Tommy said, in stumbling, shuddering pleads. “Please don’t let him- He- He won’t let me leave. He won’t let me leave. I can’t- He hurt me. He’ll hurt me again. I- The wall- My head. He wouldn’t stop. He wouldn’t stop and it hurt and I-“

Tommy’s hand jerked up, to the way its skull caved in, to feel the soft bulbs of alliums that grew to try to comfort it, to try to make it all okay. To fend against the sound of a vicious

crack that echoed as deeply in his memories as roots.

“He- Please, he- he-“ *I think he killed me.*

The arms curled around it, holding it closer and tighter. The voice was in its ear, soft breaths reaching it, and the monster shuddered again, and its cheeks were wet. “I won’t let him,” the stranger repeated. “I won’t let him hurt you. I won’t let anyone hurt you again. It’s alright. I’m here. I’ll help you.”

The monster shook and nodded, limbs trembling, pressing closer, until it could only smell the dirt and copper of the stranger’s clothes.

Slowly, the arms moved around it to lift it up, off the ground to be carried. It was- That was good. That was good because it probably couldn’t walk on its own. Its leg was so dry and brittle and fractured, and the flowers and moss had tried to repair it, but nothing could.

(The alliums tried to whisper to it reassurances, but it could never hear them.)

The stranger gave a brief grunt of discomfort, and the monster flinched despite itself, seeing a new wave of alliums burst out the socket of the skull. Techno- Techno didn’t do anything though. His skull just tilted down, and the look in the other socket, the look of the eye beyond, his real face, was so soft and so gentle that Tommy could only breathe out a stuttering exhale and press its face against matted fabric.

“It’s alright,” Techno soothed again, and they were moving, and there was a gentle swaying. “You’re not going to hurt me. Nobody is going to get hurt anymore.”

Tommy tried its best to believe him, but at the sight of the door out of the room, it was so difficult. Its nails dug in, its body curling more, and some delirious part of itself thought the doorway might repel it. That it may never leave, not unless the person it feared finally let it out.

In the end, it was just a door.

It was sunken and ajar and buzzing with three kinds of mould that greeted the monster kindly as it was taken past. The hallway was no better, with moss and rot creeping equally up peeling walls and eating away at collapsed floorboards. Whatever picture frames that had been hung up were now tattered and bled, until nothing of the memories remained.

Ahead, some rooms were inaccessible, parts of the roof having caved in a long time ago. Not in some horrid crash, but just slowly as each beam softened and gave and sagged like a blanket worn to the thread. The whole house was sagging, slowly, waiting for the day it fell into the ground and became like a rotted log in the forest waiting to finally be eaten away.

Above it, the monster could hear Techno mumble softly about how he would have to come back and harvest some mushrooms for a soup. It didn’t really understand, but it was trying not to look, to not take in the last bits of gruesome detail of this infected interior.

There were bodies.

Back in the room there had only been a couple, one dangling from the ceiling until it fell apart, because those ones had managed to make it farther than the rest. (They were trying to kill the heart. They were trying to kill the monster. In the end, they were so obsolete, so unseen, that the monster never even understood their intentions. If it did, it might not have stopped them.)

Now there were more bodies, one fallen over the banister of the stairs, another under the collapsed roof, some down below on the main floor, nothing more than bones under a carpet of moss. A nice mushroom colony would always make its home.

There was one, in a room Techno carried it past. The monster glanced as they kept going, but it didn't realize.

It saw a body, suspended by roots, having been here so long that it was dragged to the ground in one long stretched mess, most flesh having sloughed off to leave bones not yet picked over. So much of the face was missing in fact, so much of it gone leaving nothing but mould and fungus, that the monster found no familiarity in the empty eye sockets. Another victim that fell like the rest.

(If there had been more left, if the body hadn't been rotted so thoroughly, perhaps the monster would have been able to recognize it. Perhaps it would have realized that it had been living in fear of something that was already dead, that had been dead for a long time now. Suspended, gently swinging, faceless. Funny, how someone so horrid and who could drive their memory so deeply like a twisting scalpel, had bones no different than anyone else. Unrecognizable as anything but food for the decomposers.)

The stairs were soft and sagging as the stranger descended them, all the while keeping Tommy safely in his arms. It didn't really know why it was being held so gently, didn't really understand how touch worked. But it was safe. That, it knew thoroughly.

Techno waded through the grass growing in the living room, past alliums blooming in the chest cavity of a hunter, and through the tangled mess of leaves that leaned towards murky window panes. The back door was open, a bloody handprint on its handle, and it was so easy, perhaps even easier, to leave the house than it was to leave the room.

The night air was cold and brisk and haunting, and Tommy could do nothing but lean away from the warm body in order to feel a genuine chill sting at its wet cheeks. Crisp leaves brushed against each other in the dark, rising from a forest that's silhouette was scarcely seen. Around them the garden was overgrown, the flowers in it dead and brown and dry, buried beneath flourishing alliums that twisted and leaned towards the monster that passed. Their petals brushed its leg. (They were happy, for finally it could leave. Again, it could not understand them.)

Techno gently shifted Tommy to one arm, so he could reach forward and unlatch the rotted gate, that nearly fell off its hinges just swinging open. He stepped outside, then shut the gate, and an allium drew upwards and its roots gently sewed the latch shut, so that it may never open again.

The stretch of grass between the forest and the garden was so wide. It passed so quickly, beneath the progress of the stranger. Bloody footprints left in a bloody trail. (One might think that the stranger could be the monster.)

“He won’t come after me?” Tommy ventured to ask, its voice so quiet and hovering, not sure, not quite. They were outside, but even then, a part of it was still in that room. “He won’t find me?”

“Never,” said Techno. (He didn’t know which of the bodies it was, but he still understood that whatever threat was already gone. He didn’t tell the monster, because it was unnecessary. It would never be hurt again.) “I wouldn’t let him anywhere near you, even if he could find you. I’ll keep you safe.”

(Unsaid was that the monster had been safe enough alone. That of all the hunters that tried to cleanse the house, few were even able to look into its eyes before they were consumed, screaming, as flowers burst forth from their eyes and nose and bloody lips, to rip open their skulls and chests, as every buckling bone and muscle and stretch of flesh gave way to the rot. Perhaps the monster could have lingered there inevitably, but strangers were kinder than an endless stretch of time.)

“He might hurt you too,” the monster mumbled anyway, pushing its face back into the fabric. A rough hand settled on its head, large clawed fingers carting through its hair, what remained of it on the side of its collapsed skull.

“Little one, do you think anyone could hurt me?” he asked, softly and soothingly, with that love in its eye, even as flowers sprouted from the other socket, turned affectionately towards the monster.

Tommy tried to consider him. The bulking form, the thick, meaty and clawed hands, the blood-matted fabrics and the flesh-laden skull covering his face. He was broad and hulking and dangerous, with a large blunt axe tucked too casually into his belt.

In the end it shrugged. “You look kind of like a pussy.”

“... a what.”

“It’s okay,” it consoled, tucking itself back against him. “I’ll protect you.”

“Kid- Kid no. I’ll protect you, I already promised.”

“But I’m better at it,” it mumbled. “The other strangers, they didn’t last long. I’ll protect you, if you can protect me from him.”

There was a moment, then he huffed, hefting up the monster again as he ducked into the trees, ruffling fingers affectionately through the hair and flower bulbs. “Alright. I’ll protect you from the monster.”

It blinked at that though. That... didn’t make much sense, Tommy thought. It looked up at the skull, and had to wonder. “But... But I’m the monster, aren’t I?”

The hand was warm and startling and present when it cupped its cheek. “No,” the stranger told it. “You’re not the monster.”

“Oh.” It- He said. He curled up closer, wondering, not quite understanding, but maybe some part of him was just a bit relieved. “I feel like one. I- I think I’ve been one, for a long time.”

“I think we’re both talking about two very different definitions of a monster,” Techno told him.

As they walked, Tommy noted the trees. The broad trunks and cluttered branches, the way the leaves rang crisply and loudly out in the night air. Techno was following a thin animal trail that weaved and bobbed in the thick foliage. (He was unimpeded, but Tommy imagined that in another life, if he were to do the same thing, his bare feet would be filled with cuts and thorns, if he were able to walk at all.)

It was quiet, without animals, and with only the buzz of crickets somewhere unseen. Beyond it, Tommy thought he might be able to hear someone singing, but it was a clunky, vague melody. (Around them, the alliums which grew up in their footsteps promised that they could sing a much sweeter tune.)

That lulling voice grew louder as they walked, just briefly, and then, for no discernable reason, cut off without finishing its wordless ramble. Techno remained unbothered, carrying Tommy as steadily as he always had, perhaps having not even heard the singing to begin with.

That is, until a new stranger stood on the path in front of them.

They were tall and lean, with too long arms and too many joints, but their face was nice. Beyond the gaping cuts and blistered holes were soft brown eyes scrunched up by its cheeks, curious and active and watching. Those eyes were on Tommy, and he wasn’t sure what else to do other than stare back.

“Hello,” they said, with a tilt of their head.

Techno stopped a few feet away, and his relaxed posture let Tommy know that he could relax too. The stranger approached them both, getting a bit closer, looking down at Tommy.

“Hullo” Techno responded.

“You found a friend!” they noted. There was a grin, a happy glimmer to their eyes, and when they blinked, their eyelids sort of looked like knots in wood, deep and swirling.

“I did,” Techno confirmed. “This is Tommy. I found him in a house. Tommy, this is Wilbur.”

“Hello!” Wilbur cooed.

“Hi,” Tommy mumbled. He didn’t really like how crowded he felt, but it wasn’t too bad. It was better than the room. Company would probably be better. But then he thought about what Techno said, and twisted to look up at the boar skull. “Wait, did you- did you kidnap me?”

Both strangers were looking at him, except he wasn't sure if they were strangers anymore, he wasn't even sure if he was a monster. He still had the weird rough ridges in his skin like tree bark, the creeping fungi on his cheeks, and the alliums full and flush along the lengths of his leg where the bone had been shattered and along the edges of his head where his skull had been crushed. It didn't seem to matter though.

"I mean," Techno began. "Probably? I didn't think you cared too much. I can, uh, ask permission to continue kidnapping you, if you want."

"Oh," Tommy said. "That's okay. I just... wasn't thinking about it. I think it's okay that you're kidnapping me."

"It's always better to beg forgiveness than ask permission," Wilbur agreed with a solemn nod.

"No," Techno said, zero inflection in his voice. "That's literally the opposite of what Phil and I keep asking you to do."

Wilbur wasn't listening though. His focus just seemed to be on Tommy, and all at once he reached forward, and Tommy flinched on instinct. "Don't," he gasped out, fingers curling tighter into matted fabric. "The flowers, you'll rot-!"

"Hey," Wilbur said softly, and Tommy trailed off. His hands were moving up, to cup the monster's cheeks. "It's okay. You won't be able to hurt us."

Somehow, Tommy tried to believe him.

Techno's touch had been warm and sudden and solid and all encompassing. In comparison, Wilbur's fingers were cold needle points on his face, bringing all his senses to the contact, until all that Tommy could think was that this was what it was like to be held. This is what a person felt like.

Despite his words, Wilbur jolted a bit, as rot bit at his fingers, turning them black and white with fuzzy mould that was soft on Tommy's cheeks. Flowers sprang up, not ripping through flesh, but instead sprouting rapidly like bees from a hive from the clusters of honeycomb holes across Wilbur's face. Perfect little holes for the alliums to bloom from individually, with a tunnel system unseen that the roots no doubt traced every edge of.

Wilbur blinked, a startled look on his face, but he wasn't hurt. "Huh. I don't know if we'll have a big enough garden for him."

"We can make more space," Techno promised, and he got them moving again, Wilbur trailing beside, now holding onto one of Tommy's hands. His fingertips were rigid and bumpy from the little holes in the taut skin, and Tommy found it fascinating as they ran over his knuckles and palms, keeping him here.

"Am I going to live with you?" he asked, because they had to be taking him somewhere, and he thought they were making a garden for him. Maybe that was too much to think.

“Of course, little one,” Techno said with a grunt. “So long as you want to. Our home's not much, but I thought it might be better than a rotting house.”

Tommy nodded, shivering, pulling tighter. “I think I died there,” he said, but he didn’t know why. If there was a hitch in Techno’s step, in Wilbur’s motion, then no one said anything about it. “I didn’t want to.”

“It’s alright,” Techno murmured, his arms like a barrier around the monster. “Everything will die, at different times and under different circumstances, but it’ll be alright. You’re here with us now.”

“I might hurt you,” Tommy tried, and there were the milky pink tears again, trailing down its cheeks. It looked up at the stranger, with one eye wide and tired and scared all over again, while the other was simply a collapsed socket. A tragedy that should have never happened. “Everything I touch rots. They all- Everyone who came was rotted away. I’ll rot your home away too.”

“It’s alright,” now Wilbur was the one to answer, and his touch was feather-light, his eyes kind while his face bobbed with little alliums sprouting from the clusters of holes. “You won’t, and even if you do, our home has always been an easy thing to put back together.”

Tommy nodded, like this all made sense, and listened to the breaths of the two not-so-strangers. He realized, in that moment with their footsteps and the branches and the wind, that their breathing was the only set he could hear. The sickly, shuddering inhales that had haunted him alone in that room were gone. At some point, he’d stopped breathing, the flowers in his lungs silent and slumbering.

A cottage came into view. It had a sprawling garden contained by a crumbling stone wall, and a nice porch with a wicker rocking chair. Smoke curled from the chimney, and the attic window was open, its curtains pulled apart. Someone was there, watching them approach, and even though their face wasn’t quite together in the shape of something human, Tommy thought it might be kind all the same.

“I don’t want to be alone,” Tommy mumbled, as Techno stooped to undo a little iron gate to the garden.

“You won’t be,” Techno promised him.

That gate opened.

The alliums grew in their footsteps.

The cottage waited for them.

(The flowers whispered I love you. The flowers whispered we care. The flowers whispered you’re safe. Maybe. Maybe Tommy heard them this time.)

A long way away, there was a house that continued to rot. It's heart was gone and it was empty. Nothing but bodies remained.

End Notes

Absolutely buckwild. Anyway,

Techno: hey phil you know that feeling when you see a child in a walmart with no parents around and you kind of just want to put them in your shopping cart and leave

Phil: do i what

Techno: yeah anyway funny story but look at this child i acquired

Tommy: i was half-off

I might write more of this someday but that day is not today. Happy Halloween.

Tumblr [@space-anon-writes](#)

EDIT: NOW THERE'S ART

-[Techno @ Tommy: you live like this?](#)

-[Tommy vibing with the alliums :\)](#)

-Submission: [Tommy is enjoying life to the fullest](#)

-[Allium!Tommy chilling in the corner](#)

-[More Allium!Tommy :D](#)

-[this boy has bad posture](#)

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